

# Spark Gap

Vol. 28, Issue 12, December 2011 *MARC - Serving Central Indiana Communities for twenty-seven Years*



**MERRY CHRISTMAS & HAPPY NEW YEAR  
FROM THE MID-STATE AMATEUR RADIO CLUB**

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*Please plan on eating breakfast at the December MARC meeting. There will be a breakfast given to all that come to the meeting so please plan on attending and taking part of our celebration of the HOLIDAYS.*

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*From the Pres. . . . .*

On Our MARC...

Season's Greetings!

I would like to take this opportunity to extend my personal congratulations to our own Rhonda Curtis, WS9H, who was named Indiana Outstanding Amateur of the Year at the Ft. Wayne Hamfest on November 19th. If you know Rhonda and her dedication to the Mid-State and Indianapolis Clubs, as well as her contributions and service to amateur radio, this recognition should come as no surprise.

As I considered what I might say in this month's column, I decided that one thing stood out above all the rest, namely, that I wish each of you the best of the holiday season. May these final days of 2011 be filled with the joy of family and friends, rest and relaxation, and peace. And may 2012 be a year of good health and prosperity for all of us.

We hope you will be able to join us for the meeting on December 17th at 8:00 am., as we pause to share in some good food with good friends!

Bob - KC9NJM  
*President*

## -Ft Wayne Hamvention

It was the place to see and be seen last month. This year's Ft. Wayne Hamvention had the usual flea market vendors and lots of new state-of-the-art radio equipment. Software designed radios continue to grow in popularity as more manufacturers get on board and streamline the trend. Icom was back with their latest mobile, HT and small portable HF gear. One manufacturer was going soft on ham radio as he demonstrated the latest in portable inflatable masts. They demonstrated a thirty foot blow up tube that can hold a vertical or beam antenna, all at the push of the button on a fan.

One vendor gave out free samples of their latest in survival food. For as little as a hundred dollars, one can eat pretty high on the hog from small bags of beef with gravy, vegetables and other assorted menu items. The containers come with enough food for a family to survive for a week or a year. The shelf life is 25 years for the just add water food items.

The flea market on the arena floor has grown smaller while maintaining a good variety of hard to find parts. Used tubes, microphones and speakers are some of the many items on sale. There seemed to be something for everyone at the 2001 Ft. Wayne Hamvention.

-w8ish

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**30 ft inflatable mast**



**Vintage Collins Gear**



**Batteries and more batteries**



**Ray Andrews N9DUR demonstrates the latest Flex Radio software and equipment.**

## WA9RDF Net Notes:

### Holiday Nets Canceled

Due to a somewhat unusual calendar occurrence that won't come again for another 11 years, both Christmas Day and New Year's Day fall on Sundays this holiday season. As we know that these days will be busy times for our members and our fellow hams, we have decided to cancel the WA9RDF Sunday Night Nets on Dec. 25th and Jan. 1st. The "Amateur Radio Newsline Report" will also not air on these dates. It is available for download at [www.arnewsline.org](http://www.arnewsline.org). Our regular nets will resume on Sunday, Jan. 8th at 7:00 p.m.

### New Net Controls Operators

Beginning in 2012 some familiar voices will be taking turns behind the mic as Sunday Night Net control operators. Rhonda Curtis, *WS9H*; Brenda Haler, *KC9EBL*; Bob LaGrange, *N9SIU*; and Bruce Tisdale, *K9ICP*, have agreed to share duties with long-time net control, Steve Carmean, *K9DY*. While there are still some details to be worked out, it is hoped that the new rotation will be underway early in the new year.

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### **Rhonda Curtis named AOY**

Congratulations to MARC club member, Rhonda Curtis-WS9H for being named the 2011 IRCC Outstanding Amateur of the Year.

Rhonda took over the VE testing for the Indianapolis Radio Club and then stepped up to assume the VE position for the MARC team when Dave Wendt-KA9OOH passed away. She now handles the ARES Net on the Indianapolis 70 repeater and has filled the position of Marion County EC. The selection committee credited Rhonda for constantly recruiting new hams, especially women.

She now coordinates the monthly dinner for [Amateur Radio operators](#) which is a great way to meet and greet new people. Let Rhonda know if you would like to get on the email list. Rhonda helped in the restoration of the USS Indianapolis memorial and helps train new operators in the use of HF equipment for the W9IMS special events station. Rhonda and her husband Steve, ND9C have become a valuable asset for [Amateur Radio](#) in Central Indiana and the Mid-State Amateur Radio Club. Indiana Radio Club Council chairman, Jack Parker-W8ISH, presented Rhonda with the Outstanding Amateur of the Year trophy during an awards ceremony at the Ft. Wayne Hamvention in November. She was selected over several other candidates from around the state.

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**Please remember your M.A.R.C membership dues are accepted this January 2012.**

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## **ARES/RACES**

**It is that time of year again to update your ARES/RACES information. They need to know if you have had any upgrades to your amateur license, changes in modes of operation, any new equipment. Please also let us know about changes to your home address or phone numbers and email address.**

**ARES/RACES needs this information so we can maintain good contact with you as a volunteer and member of the team.**

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**FROM 1961 .....**

**O S C A R N E W S L E T T E R**  
**December 12, 1961**

### **OSCAR SATELLITE IN ORBIT**

**At 2041 GMT, 12 December 1961 the Oscar satellite was hurled into orbit by the Discoverer XXXVI launching vehicle from Vandenberg Air Force Base, California. The satellite immediately went into a North-South orbit and was picked up loud and clear by the hams at KC4USB (Marie Byrd Base) at the South Pole a few minutes after launch.**

**The word was quickly relayed back to the Oscar Tracking Station, K6QEZ, by W4ABY. Acquisition was also obtained by hams at Kodiak, Alaska and by KH6UK in Hawaii on the first pass.**

**Oscar is on a frequency between 144.990 and 145.008 and has tremendous c.w. signal strength on a direct, overhead pass! Tracking reports have begun to flow into the Center. W1AW heard the first**

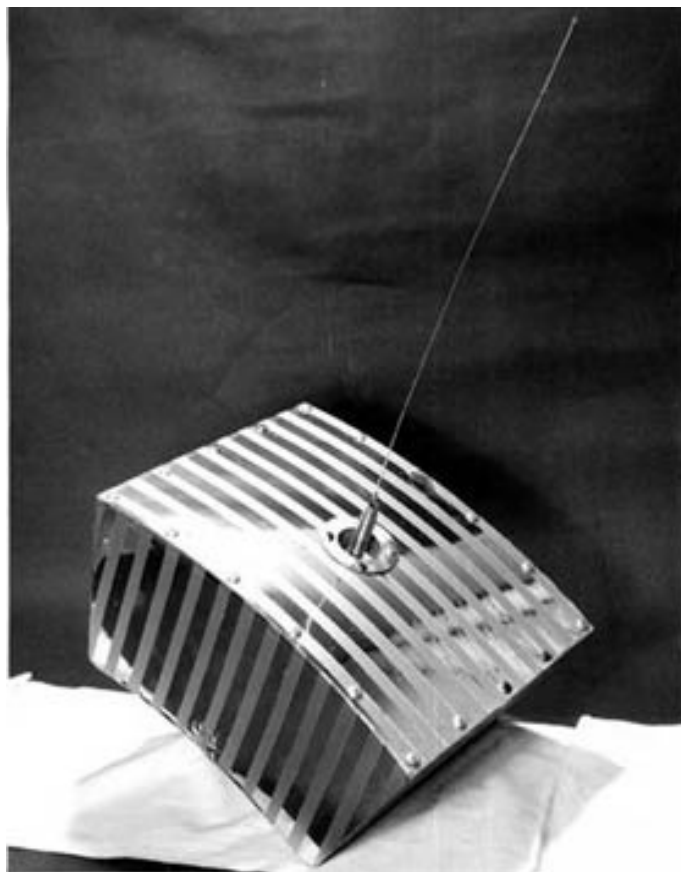
pass S9 over the East coast.

The following telegram was received by the Center from the RSGB:

**OSCAR HEARD 0055 GMT X KEYING OK X STRENGTH NINE PLUS X DOPPLER SEVEN KC X FURTHER DATA AIR HAIL X.**

Orbit is being computed, but insufficient time has elapsed to permit predictions to be made of time Oscar will pass over your area. Listen to W1AW and the Voice of America for orbital predictions. Continuous 24-hour a day monitoring is essential until predictions are established. In fact, this monitoring is urged to check for unpredicted reception at times when the Oscar satellite is theoretically out of range! Our thanks to the Air Force and men of Vandenberg AFB who helped to make this historic milestone possible!

Actual launch was attended by W6SAI, K6LFH, W6MLZ and W0TSN. Full Oscar story in February [1962] QST and CQ and more details in our next news letter!





## 2011 SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

### DECEMBER 2011

#### 17 MARC Meeting - 8:00 AM, Franklin, IN

Located at the Johnson County Emergency Management Agency, 1111 Hospital Road, Franklin, IN. VEC Testing after the meeting (approx. 9:30 am to 11:00 am)

### January 2012

#### 21 MARC Meeting - 8:00 AM, Franklin, IN

Located at the Johnson County Emergency Management Agency, 1111 Hospital Road, Franklin, IN. VEC Testing after the meeting (approx. 9:30 am to 11:00 am)

### February 2012

#### 18 MARC Meeting - 8:00 AM, Franklin, IN

Located at the Johnson County Emergency Management Agency, 1111 Hospital Road, Franklin, IN. VEC Testing after the meeting (approx. 9:30 am to 11:00 am)

## 2011 Indiana Hamfests


**The season is over for Hamfests.**

**More to come, stayed tuned.**

## MID-STATE AMATEUR RADIO CLUB

The Mid-State Amateur Radio Club meets the THIRD SATURDAY of each month in the basement of the Johnson County Emergency Management Agency, 1111 Hospital Road, Franklin, Indiana 46131.

See our website, [www.midstatehams.org](http://www.midstatehams.org), for maps on how to get to our meeting.

Everyone is welcome, you do not have to be a HAM to attend our meetings or a member of the club.

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**WA9RDF**  
**Repeater**  
**146.835/**  
**146.235 MHz**  
**151.4 Hz PL Tone**

**Club Officers:**  
**President: Robert Jones – KC9NJM**  
**Vice President: Dave Daily – KB9LOT**  
**Secretary: Bruce Tisdale – KC9ICP**  
**Treasurer: Jacki Frederick – KI6QOG**  
**Repeater Trustee: Jay Chrismon – AA9YP**

***Weekly Net: Sunday evening 7:00 PM ARES/RACES members and ALL RADIO AMATEURS***

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***The Official Newsletter of the Mid-State Amateur Radio Club***

*P.O. Box 836  
Franklin, Indiana  
46131*

***Editor: Robert LaGrange N9SIU***

***Please send your articles to my email [n9siu@yahoo.com](mailto:n9siu@yahoo.com) no later than the 3<sup>rd</sup> of the month***

